

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-10 (canceled).

13. (Newly presented) A method for responding to a query for a computer network address corresponding to a request name, said method comprising:

(a) searching a database for a network address corresponding to the request name;

(b) if the search locates a network address corresponding to the request name,

responding to the query with the network address in the database corresponding to the request name;

(c) if the search does not locate a network address corresponding to the request name,

initiating a process that (i) tests the query for information about the nature of the address being sought, and (ii) responds to the request with a referral response identifying an alternate network address selected in accordance with the results of the tests.

14. (Newly presented) The method of claim 13 where the referral response identifies a network address for a web site that assists the user in identifying a desired address.

15. (Newly presented) The method of claim 14 where the referral response identifies a network address for a web site that prompts the user for different spellings of the request name.

16. (Newly presented) The method of claim 13 where the referral response identifies a network address for a web site that offers a service to the user.

17. (Newly presented) The method of claim 16 where the referral response identifies a network address for a web site that prompts the user to purchase a domain name.

18. (Newly presented) The method of claim 13 wherein steps (a) and (b) are performed on a first server, and the referral response of step (c) is generated on a second server distinct from the first server.

19. (Newly presented) A system for responding to a query from a user for a computer network address corresponding to a request name, said system comprising:

(a) a database that associates names with corresponding network addresses; and
(b) a first server executing a first process that searches the database for the request name such that,

(i) when the search locates a network address corresponding to the request name, the first application responds to the query with the network address in the database corresponding to the request name, and
(ii) when the search does not locate a network address corresponding to the request name, a second process is initiated;

wherein the second process tests the query and generates a referral response identifying an alternative network address selected in accordance with the results of the test.

20. (Newly presented) The system of claim 19 where the referral response identifies a network address for a web site that assists the user in identifying a desired address.

21. (Newly presented) The system of claim 20 where the referral response identifies a network address for a web site that prompts a user for different spellings of the request name.

22. (Newly presented) The system of claim 19 where the referral response identifies a network address for a web site that offers a service to the user.

23. (Newly presented) The system of claim 19 wherein a second server performs the second process.